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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/051,392	01/16/2002	Michael J. Yancey	WEYE118528/24380C	2980

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, TU C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3749	

DATE MAILED: 04/24/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/051,392	YANCEY ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Tu C. Nguyen	3749	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2002.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-4 and 12 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,5 and 10 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 6-9,11 and 13-18 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Applicant's election without traverse of Figure 2 corresponding to claims 1, 5-11, 13-18 in Paper No. 5 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marsh (U.S. Patent No. 4,253,822) in view of Chung (U.S. Patent No. 3,440,135). Marsh discloses in the single figure a high turbulence dryer (2), a burner (1), and a cyclone separator (3) for drying pulp. The burner (1) receives recycled air from inlet (6) and fuel from inlet (4) terminating in a jet (5) mixes it with fresh air from inlet (7) and exhausts substantially fresh air to outlet (9) which joins a pulp inlet passage (19) before passing through an inlet aperture (20) into the dryer (2) and exits at passage (24) leading to the cyclone separator (3). The cyclone separator (3) has an outlet (26) for dried pulp product and a pipe (27) for air outlet. Marsh lacks the teaching of the pulp supply including a crosslinking treatment to the pulp. Chung discloses in Figure 1 a schematic representation of the process for producing crosslinked fibers including the pulp is fed into the reaction chamber for drying and curing. Chung teaches the air dry pulp (1) directed in mat form

to an aqueous solution of a crosslinking impregnant (3) contained in the tank (2). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the crosslinking treatment suggested by Chung in Marsh's pulp supply source as such would provide stiffness to the pulp.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marsh, as modified above, in view of Harding (U.S. Patent No. 4,110,195). Marsh discloses in the single figure a high turbulence dryer (2) for drying pulp, as modified above, comprising elements as recited but does not teach the pulp supply further having a feed device set forth in this claim. Harding discloses in Figure 5 a pulp feed device from which pulp enters through inlet (370) and is rotating around annular space (375) by vanes (376) on rotor (377). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the pulp feed device taught by Harding and apply it in Marsh's pulp supply station as such would assist in feeding the pulp continuously in a consistent matter and at a desired rate.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marsh, as modified above, in view Kurtz (U.S. Patent No. 5,176,793). Marsh discloses in the single figure a high turbulence dryer (2) for drying pulp, as modified above, comprising elements as recited but does not teach pulp supply further having a first dewatering device in flow communication with a second dewatering device set forth in these claims. Kurtz discloses in Figure 1 a dewatering device comprising pulp supply inlet (2), first dewatering device (3) and a second dewatering stage in form of a screw press (4). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art during the time of the invention to apply the plurality of dewatering treatment stages suggested by Kurtz in Marsh's pulp supply station as such various zones would provide higher pulp consistency of the treated final product.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-9, 11, 13-18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kurtz of U.S. Patent No. 5,176,793 discloses in Figure 1 watering device comprising pulp inlet (2), first dewater device (3) and a second dewatering stage in form of a screw press (4) but does not teach a treatment recycle conduit in flow communication between the first and the second dewatering devices.

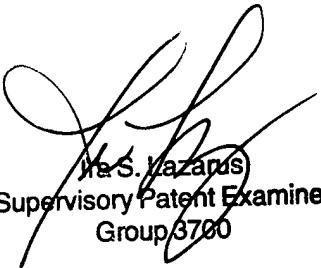
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tu C. Nguyen whose telephone number is 703-305-0537. The examiner can normally be reached on (M-F) 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ira S. Lazarus can be reached on 703-308-1935. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9302 for regular communications and 703-872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1148.

Tu C. Nguyen

April 17, 2003



Handwritten signature of Tu C. Nguyen, consisting of a series of fluid, cursive lines.

Xia S. Lazarus
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3700